WILLMAR POLICE DEPARTMENT

GENERAL DIRECTIVE: 0004

Date Issued: **08/11/2003** Revision Dates: **05/01/2009**,

03/25/2014, 12/19/2016,

09/30/2021

Application: All Personnel Pages: 9

SUBJECT: ALLEGATIONS OF MISCONDUCT / DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

PURPOSE

The purpose of this directive is to establish departmental procedures for the initiation and investigation of allegations of misconduct against employees of the Willmar Police Department.

This procedure is solely and exclusively for internal administrative purposes. All documentation relating to a complaint is to be treated confidentially and will not be released unless court ordered to do so.

This directive shall also establish a progressive disciplinary procedure for sustained violations of Department Rules and Regulations. (See General Directive #0001).

DEFINITIONS

Unfounded means there is no factual basis for the allegation. The act or acts alleged did not occur.

Exonerated means a fair preponderance of the evidence established that either:

- the agency member named in the complaint was not involved in the alleged misconduct; or
- the act(s) that provided the basis for the complaint occurred; however, the investigation revealed that such act(s) were justified, lawful or proper.

Not Sustained means the investigation failed to disclose sufficient evidence to prove or disprove the allegations made in the complaint.

Sustained means a fair preponderance of the evidence obtained in the investigation established that the Law Enforcement Officer's (LEO's) actions constituted misconduct.

Policy Failure means that the complaint revealed a policy failure. The allegation is factual and the LEO(s) followed proper agency procedure; however, that procedure has proven to be deficient.

POLICY

It shall be the policy of the Willmar Police Department to investigate all allegations of misconduct. Allegations of misconduct may be reported from any source, internal or external, and be of a criminal or non-criminal nature. All allegations of misconduct against a Willmar Police Department employee shall be documented.

PROCEDURE

All allegations should be referred to the employee's immediate supervisor whenever possible. The on-duty supervisor will be notified if the employee's immediate supervisor is not available or the employee has a rotation of supervisors.

Complaint Forms – The following forms are referred to in this directive. These forms are to be used for incidents involving alleged employee misconduct or disciplinary procedures.

- 1. Allegation of Employee Misconduct two pages
- 2. Notification of Complaint Investigation (Citizen) one page
- 3. Notification of Complaint Investigation (*Employee*) one page
- 4. Garrity Warning one page
- 5. Notification of Complaint Results Allegation Unfounded / Exonerated / Not Sustained / Policy Failure (*Citizen*) one page
- 6. Notification of Complaint Results Allegation Sustained (Citizen) one page
- 7. Notification of Complaint Results Allegation Unfounded / Exonerated / Not Sustained / Policy Failure (*Employee*) one page
- 8. Notification of Complaint Results Allegation Sustained (Employee) one page
- 9. Employee Disciplinary Notice one page

Complainant Responsibilities – If a complaint against an employee cannot be resolved by a supervisor, the complainant has the option to make a written complaint of the alleged misconduct using the "Allegation of Employee Misconduct" form. This form will be made available by Willmar Police Department personnel at the Police Department or can be sent via email. Complaints may be received in person, by phone, in writing or via email.

In order for an unresolved complaint to be considered valid and with merit, the complainant must sign the complaint form. Complaints will not be investigated if the complainant is not willing to sign a complaint statement, unless unable to physically do so or meets other criteria as stated herein. If the complainant refuses to sign the complaint form, this fact must be documented. The complainant may remain anonymous; however, they should be advised that remaining anonymous may affect the investigation of the complaint.

Willmar Police Department personnel must provide assistance to individuals who express the desire to lodge complaints against any employee of this agency.

The complainant must be advised of the procedures for submitting the complaint and provided with a copy of their submitted complaint.

Anyone who has personal knowledge of facts, or who has reliable hearsay information, may file a complaint. Any agency member who has personal knowledge of misconduct shall file a complaint according to the procedures stated herein.

Any licensed agency member shall self-report to the Chief Law Enforcement Officer (CLEO) and to the Peace Officer Standards and Training Board (POST) any action, inaction, or condition of that agency member, which the agency member reasonably believes would constitute grounds for disciplinary action under any of the POST Board's regulatory provisions.

If a person making a complaint sets forth specific believable facts supporting an allegation of misconduct, but wishes to remain anonymous, the CLEO receiving the complaint may, at the CLEO's sole discretion, permit the complainant to remain anonymous. In this instance, the CLEO shall sign the complaint as the complainant. If the CLEO has reason to believe that the complaint is unfounded, the CLEO shall have the authority to require an anonymous complainant to identify himself/herself. If that complainant refuses to do so, the CLEO may refuse to accept a complaint and shall advise the anonymous person of that fact.

A complainant may be accompanied by an attorney, or other appropriate representative, at the time a complaint is filed or at any other stage of the process.

Supervisor Responsibilities – A supervisor may make an attempt to promptly resolve a complaint. If the complaint cannot be resolved by the supervisor, the complainant shall be notified of his/her right to file a written complaint, which shall be completed on the "Allegation of Employee Misconduct" form.

The supervisor shall complete a written or dictated report documenting his/her knowledge and attempt to resolve the complaint. The completed "Allegation of Employee Misconduct" form and supervisor report will be forwarded to the Chief of Police by the start of the next business day. Both reports should be handed directly to the Chief of Police, or in his/her absence, placed on his/her desk in a sealed envelope.

Chief of Police Responsibilities – The CLEO shall perform the following functions when receiving a signed complaint. In an effort to provide prompt action and resolution to a complaint, these functions can be initiated by the person responsible for performing the duties of the Chief of Police during a prolonged absence or illness.

 Make an initial determination whether the facts alleged require a formal investigation.

- 1. If the CLEO decides that an investigation is not required, the disposition of the investigation is not required.
- 2. The disposition of the complaint itself shall be cleared as "unfounded", "not sustained", "exonerated" or "policy failure".
- 3. The complainant and the employee will be notified of this decision and the basis for the determination.
- 4. If the complainant supplies additional information within thirty (30) days of this determination, the CLEO may reverse this decision and order a formal investigation.
- If it is determined an investigation is warranted, the CLEO shall:
 - Assign a personnel investigation (PI) control number to the received complaint. The control number shall be of the following format: 4 digits (indicating the current year) followed by a hyphen and 3 digits (consecutive increments of 1 for each complaint received that year). Example: PI #2003-001.
 - 2. Assign an investigating officer to the complaint.
 - 3. Notify the complainant that an investigation has been initiated by using the "Notification of Complaint Investigation" (Citizen) form.
 - 4. Notify the employee(s) named in the complaint that a complaint has been received by using the "Notification of Complaint Investigation" (Employee) form.

After a complaint is filed, the CLEO shall sign the document, keeping a copy for the agency and giving or mailing a copy to the complainant. The CLEO will forward a copy of the document to the employee only after it is determined that the complaint does not allege a criminal violation and the notification will not impede a criminal investigation.

When the CLEO believes an external investigation is appropriate, or when the CLEO is the subject of the complaint, the investigation will be assigned to an external agency that has no discernible conflict of interest.

The CLEO may delegate the duties and responsibilities required of a CLEO by this policy to an appropriate designee.

The CLEO may suspend an employee with pay at any time during the investigation of a complaint.

Upon completion of the investigation of a complaint, the CLEO shall:

- Make a determination of the final disposition status based upon the information provided in the investigative report and supporting documentation.
- Notify the complainant of the investigative conclusion using one of the two appropriate forms:

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- "Notification of Complaint Results Allegation Unfounded / Exonerated / Not Sustained / Policy Failure" (Citizen) or
- "Notification of Complaint Results Allegation Sustained" (Citizen)
- Notify the employee of the investigative conclusion using one of the two appropriate forms:
 - "Notification of Complaint Results Allegation Unfounded / Exonerated / Not Sustained / Policy Failure" (Employee) or
 - "Notification of Complaint Results Allegation Sustained" (Employee)
- Direct the safe and confidential storage of all personnel investigation records.
 - No record or documentation of any type will appear in the employee's personnel file relating to a complaint other than the "Employee Disciplinary Notice" form and only if discipline was administered.

The CLEO may reopen the investigation at any time if substantial new evidence is discovered concerning the complaint.

City Administrator Responsibilities – Any complaint made against the Chief of Police shall be initially made to the City Administrator. Upon receiving a complaint, the City Administrator shall handle the complaint in the same manner as all other reported complaints as outlined in this directive.

The City Administrator should refer investigations of alleged misconduct against a CLEO to an outside law enforcement agency or criminal justice agency.

Investigative Officer Responsibilities – A person will not assume the role of an investigating officer until assigned as such by the CLEO.

When assigned, the investigating officer shall first determine if the complaint is criminal in nature, in which criminal charges may be forthcoming. If it is determined that criminal charges may be forthcoming, the investigating officer shall give the accused employee all of the legal rights that would be accorded a suspect in a criminal investigation. The investigating officer should also confer with the Chief of Police as to whether or not to proceed with the investigation until the pending criminal process has been completed.

If the complaint alleges non-criminal misconduct, the investigating officer shall:

- Conduct a thorough investigation and record all interviews.
- Provide specific documentation as to investigative actions taken in chronological order.
- Submit notes, recorded interview tapes, photos and any other documentation, along with a summary report, gathered during the course of the investigation.
- Document all time and record the total amount of time spent on an investigation.
- Keep the Chief of Police informed of any unusual circumstances or other misconduct that may be uncovered during the course of the investigation.

- In the event the complaint is against the CLEO, the investigator must make the City Administrator aware of any pertinent findings.
- Complete and submit the investigation facts/findings reports within 30 days from the date assigned, unless approval for an extension has been granted by the Chief of Police due to unforeseen investigative complications.

The investigator must prepare a report that contains all relevant information organized into the following three (3) sections:

- Allegations: An itemized summary of the acts of misconduct alleged in the complaint. Reference must be made to those rules, procedures, orders, statutes or constitutional provisions that would be violated if the allegations are taken as true.
- Investigation: A chronological summary of the investigation, including all pertinent facts obtained through interviews with the complainant, accused agency member(s), and all available witnesses. Written statements, descriptions and analysis of any physical evidence, and all other relevant information, must be included.
- Conclusion: The investigator's findings and conclusions as to whether any
 misconduct occurred and the underlying reasons for the findings and conclusions.

Investigative Issues – Any officer(s) assigned to investigate an allegation of misconduct will conduct the investigation in a manner that conforms to the following:

- Upon an employee's request, he/she may be allowed, without unreasonable delay, to have a union representative, attorney, and/or supervisor present during the interview. The employee's representative "shall not take an active part" in the interview, but act only as an observer.
- The employee alleged of misconduct shall not be allowed to read other personnel investigation reports, nor have access to other information obtained during the investigative process, without the approval of the Chief of Police.
- All employees shall be interviewed on duty unless granted permission by the Chief of Police to do otherwise.
- All agency members must cooperate with the investigation.
- The Peace Officer Discipline Procedures Act (M.S. 626.89) shall be complied with in all personnel investigations involving sworn personnel.
- No documentation relating to the personnel investigation should be left in a place where it is accessible to someone not assigned to the investigation.
- Employees interviewed are to be directed to not discuss the case with anyone except the officer(s) assigned to conduct the investigation and their union representative.
- Conversations concerning the personnel investigation should not be discussed with anyone except staff assigned to the investigation or persons who have information concerning the case.
- No employee, complainant, or witness shall be required to take a polygraph examination against his/her will. All such tests shall be done on a voluntary basis.

Complaint Resolution – Final disposition of allegations of employee misconduct will be made by the Chief of Police. The final disposition shall be classified in one of the following ways:

- Unfounded The allegation is false or not factual.
- Exonerated The incident occurred, but was lawful and proper.
- Not Sustained Insufficient evidence to prove or disprove the allegation.
- Sustained The allegation is supported by sufficient evidence.
- Policy Failure The policy was found to be deficient.

If the complaint is "sustained", the CLEO will:

- Issue findings of fact, including a summary of the acts constituting misconduct and the specific statutes, policies, regulations and procedures violated.
- Take appropriate remedial and/or disciplinary action.
- Advise the complainant of any public information regarding the disposition.

Prior to the implementation of disciplinary action, the respondent will be provided with a copy of the findings of fact. The CLEO must review the findings of fact with the respondent and explain the reasons for the disciplinary action.

The CLEO may postpone making a decision until any related criminal charges are resolved. The complainant and subject of the investigation must be informed of this decision.

Disciplinary Action Penalties – A scale of progressive penalties permitted by law and/or bargaining agreements will be used by the Willmar Police Department to discipline employees found guilty of violating agency rules and regulations.

Serious or gross violations may result in the application of a more severe or a combination of penalties for a first offense. The progressive scale of penalty actions to be considered, in order of less to greater severity, is as follows:

- 1. Counseling
- 2. Verbal reprimand
- 3. Letter of reprimand
- 4. Loss of vacation time
- 5. Imposition of extra duty
- 6. Transfer
- 7. Suspension without pay
- 8. Loss of promotion opportunity
- 9. Demotion
- 10. Discharge from employment
- 11. Criminal prosecution

Appeals – Anyone dissatisfied with the action taken by the Chief of Police may file an appeal.

- Employee Appeal An employee may file an appeal of action taken due to
 misconduct allegations in accordance to their employee bargaining contract. For
 sworn officers, this appeal would be in accordance with Article #7, Memorandum of
 Contract between the City of Willmar and Law Enforcement Labor Services, Inc.
- Citizen Appeal Any person filing a complaint that is dissatisfied with the action taken by the Chief of Police may file an appeal with the Police Civil Service Commission. The Police Civil Service Commission shall review such information concerning the complaint as said Commission deems to be appropriate. In addition, the Police Civil Service Commission may take testimony from such persons as it deems pertinent. The Police Civil Service Commission shall have the authority to affirm or reverse the decision of the Chief of Police or amend it to whatever extent deemed appropriate. The action taken by the Police Civil Service Commission shall be final and there shall be no further appeal process.

Maintenance and Disclosure of Data – The disclosure of any data relating to a complaint to the public, complainant, and employee in connection with this directive may only be authorized by the CLEO and as provided by Chapter 13 (Minnesota Government Data Practices Act) or a valid court order. Retention of data collected or maintained in connection with a complaint shall be retained in accordance with the agency's "Records Retention Schedule".

All data collected, created or received by the agency in connection with this policy and procedure must be maintained in accordance with the agency's "Records Retention Schedule".

The placement of the disposition report, or other data in an employee's personnel file, must be governed by the agency's personnel policy.

POST Board Reporting Requirements – Under Minn. Rule 6700.1610, a licensed peace officer must self-report to the POST Board any violations of the Standard of Conduct for peace officers listed in Minn. Rule 6700.1600.

Any person with knowledge of peace officer misconduct constituting grounds for action under Minn. Stat. Chapter 214, or Minn. Rules 6700.1600, may report the violation to the Board.

Minnesota Stat. 628.8457, Subd. 3 requires CLEOs to submit individual peace officer public and private data related to allegations of misconduct to the POST Board in "real time" via the POST Board Misconduct Reporting System.

The CLEO must update data within 30 days of final disposition of a complaint or investigation.

Law Enforcement agencies and political subdivisions are prohibited from entering into a confidentiality agreement that would prevent disclosure of the data identified in Minn. Stat.

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626.8457, Subd. 3, paragraph (b) to the Board. Any such confidentiality agreement is void as to the requirements of this section.

ACCOUNTABILITY

It is the responsibility of each employee to be familiar with and adhere to this directive. It is the responsibility of all supervisors to ensure this directive is followed. Failure to adhere to this directive may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

BY ORDER OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE

James E. Felt

MJA/sae

WILLMAR POLICE DEPARTMENT

ALLEGATION OF EMPLOYEE MISCONDUCT

Incident Date: Time	e: Location:	
Specific Allegation of Miscondu	uct:	
Employee(s) Named:		
(1)	(2)	
Address: City / State / Zip:	DOB:	
Business Address:	(Residence):	
List any additional allegation, e		
attest that the above information is co	omplete and accurate.	
Signature of Complainant: _		
Date:Time:	Received By:	
In Person Telephone _	Other	
Supervisor Signature (Receivin	ng the Complaint):	

Address:	p:			
Business Addre	ess: ss):			
Personnel Invest	igation (Numbe	r Assigned):	PI#	
Investigation Not	ification:			
To Complainant:	Date:	Time:	By:	
To Employee(s):	Date:	Time:	By:	
Assigned Investiga	ator(s):			Date:
Investigation Com	pleted By:			Date:
Total Time (Hours) Spent on Invest	tigation:		
Disposition Notif	ication:			
To Complainant:	Date:	Time:	By:	
To Employee(s):	Date:	Time:	By:	

Complainant Information:

NOTIFICATION OF COMPLAINT INVESTIGATION

(Citizen)

Date
Name Address City, State Zip
Dear
Your complaint of, 20, concerning the action(s) of a member(s) of this Department has been received.
A prompt investigation will be conducted into the allegations contained in your complaint. You will be notified as to the results of the investigation in approximately thirty (30) days.
has been assigned to this investigation. If you desire to contact him/her for any reason, he/she may be reached at
Sincerely,
Chief of Police
/sae

NOTIFICATION OF COMPLAINT INVESTIGATION

(Employee)

DATE:			
TO:			
FROM:			
SUBJECT:	ALLEGATION OF EMPLOYEE	MISCONDUCT PI #	
	vised that al conduct against you concerning s	has made an allegation g an incident involving him/her. Specific	n of ally,
investigation	vised that and he/she will be contacting you e of your union present during an	has been assigned to use in the near future. You may have a by interview process.	this
Sincerely,			
 Chief of Police	е		
/\$20			

GARRITY WARNING

ORDER TO COOPERATE

EMPLOYEE UNDER INVESTIGATION

DATE:
TO:
FROM:
SUBJECT: ORDER TO COOPERATE WITH INVESTIGATION PI# -
Pursuant to your Collective Bargaining Agreement and M.S.A. 626.89, you have the right to union representation during this investigation being conducted by the Willmar Police Department. You are hereby ordered to truthfully answer all questions which may be asked of you in the course of an investigation of allegations of misconduct made against you and/or allegations touching upon your fitness for office. These questions will be specifically, directly, and narrowly related to your performance of official duties or fitness for office. Your failure to answer any of these questions in a prompt, truthful, and complete manner may be the basis for disciplinary action against you, including dismissal. Any statement you make in response to this Order, and any evidence gained as a result of your reports or statements, cannot and will not be used against you in court in any criminal proceeding.
The information you have provided may be classified as public, confidential, or private data on individuals according to the Minnesota Governmental Data Practices Act. Data classified as public may be released to anyone requesting it. Data classified as confidential is not available to you or anyone else while it has this classification, except it is available to Willmar Police Department's legal counsel, to the Chief of Police and/or his/her designee, or to a presiding judicial officer. Data classified as private may be released to you or to anyone designated by you by virtue of your informed consent pursuant to Minnesota Statute 13.05, subd. 4(d). Additionally, confidential or private data may be released pursuant to a court order or if the release is required by law.
Willmar Police Department
Police Captain
I have read and understand the above Order:
Date:

Signature of Employee

(Allegation Unfounded / Exonerated / Not Sustained / Policy Failure)

(Citizen)

Date
Name Address City, State Zip
Dear
Your report of misconduct by a member of this Department has prompted a thorough investigation of the incident you described.
After careful examination and evaluation of the facts, I have established that the concerned employee acted properly and in accordance with the policies and procedures of this Department.
Thank you for your interest and concern. I appreciate the opportunity to clarify such matters, as we desire to provide the best possible police service to the community.
If you desire further information regarding this investigation or disposition, please contact me at
Sincerely,
Chief of Police
/sae

(Allegation Sustained)

(Citizen)

Date
Name Address City, State Zip
Dear
A thorough investigation has been conducted regarding your allegation of misconduct by a member of this Department.
The investigation has confirmed that the conduct of the concerned officer(s) was contrary to Department policy.
You may be assured that this Department does not tolerate such conduct and that appropriate administrative sanctions have been administered.
Thank you for bringing this matter to my attention. Please accept my apologies for any inconvenience that this incident may have caused you. If you desire further information regarding this investigation or disposition, please contact me at
Sincerely,
 Chief of Police
/sae

(Allegation Unfounded / Exonerated / Not Sustained / Policy Failure)

(Employee)

DATE:
TO:
FROM:
SUBJECT: FINDING OF FACT PI #
A complaint filed against you involving an incident on, at, at
recorded on complaint PI #, has been reviewed by your supervisor and myself
After a thorough review, it has been determined that the complaint is:
Unfounded. No reference to this matter will be placed in your personnel file.
Exonerated. No reference to this matter will be placed in your personnel file.
Not sustained. No reference to this matter will be placed in your personnel file.
Policy Failure. No reference to this matter will be placed in your personnel file.
If you have any questions concerning this disposition, please feel free to contact
/sae

(Allegation Sustained)

(Employee)

DATE:			
TO:			
FROM:			
SUBJECT: ALLEGATION OF MISCONDUCT RELA	ΓΕD ΤΟ PI #		
Complainant:			
Employee Named:	Job_litle:		
Incident - Date: Time:	Location:		
Allegation Facts:			
Findings of Fact: Allegation Sustained - supported b	y sufficient evidence.		
Recommended Action:			
Supervisor Signature:	Date:		
Chief's Action: Approval Disapproval			
Chief's Signature:	Date:		
Remarks:			

EMPLOYEE DISCIPLINARY NOTICE

Employee Name:	Job Title:
Type of Discipline:	
1. Counseling 2. Oral Repriman	d 3. Written Reprimand
4 – 11. Other (specify penalty):	
If oral reprimand, give date, time and place of	f reprimand:
The above disciplinary action was taken agai	nst you today for:
Tardiness Absenteeism Use of excessive force Alcoholic beverage Insubordination Use of profane or abusive language Dishonesty Violation of work contract Other (describe)	
Give a statement of the facts causing this act names of persons involved:	
I delivered a copy of this form to the subject e	employee on:
Employee	Department Head or Supervisor
Note: A copy of this notice has been placed	in your personnel file.
Distribution:	